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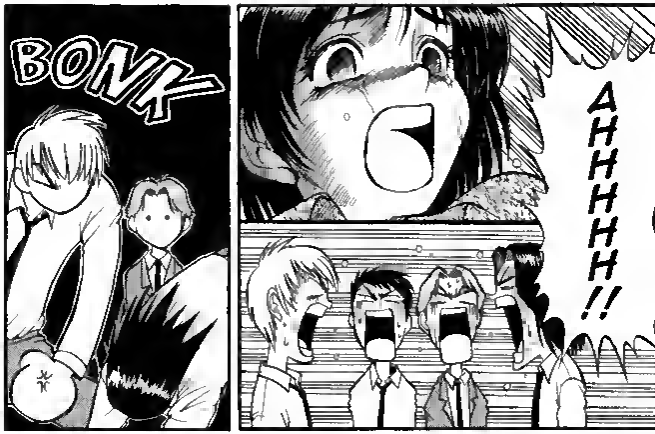
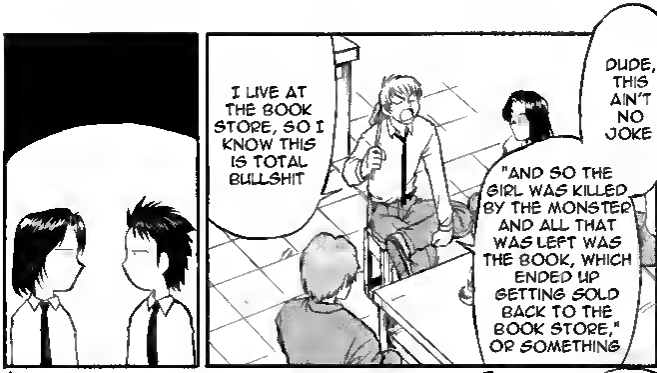
Rare Bookshop Owner Yakou's Hard Fighting Chronicle

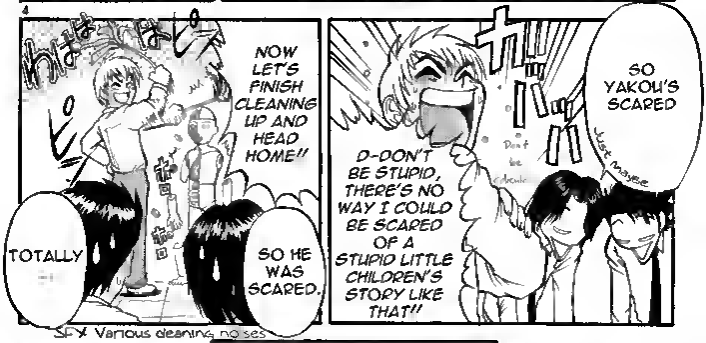
(Story) Tatami Yoshinaga

THE LATEST HOT TOPIC AMONGST GRADE SCHOOLERS IS THIS NEW GHOST STORY.
ONE DAY, COMING HOME FROM LESSONS, A SCHOOLGIRL PICKED UP A BOOK...
SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF BOOK IT WAS, BUT IT SEEMED LIKE IT WAS VERY OLD.
SO THEN, ON THE SEVENTH NIGHT AFTER SHE PICKED UP THE BOOK...
SHE STARTED HEARING THIS NOISE,
LIKE, "PATAN... PATAN... PATAN..." FROM THE BOOK SHE HAD LEFT IN THE CORNER OF HER ROOM...
SUDDENLY, SHE WOKE UP...
SHE LOOKED TOWARDS THE SOUND...
BUT WHERE THE BOOK WAS, SHE SAW A MAN...
HE WAS THE MONSTER IN THE BOOK!!


BONK
AHHHHH!!

COME TO THINK OF IT, WASN'T YAKOU'S PLACE...?
THAT'S RIGHT, WE SELL ANTIQUE BOOKS!
DAMMIT, THAT HURT! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, YAKOU?!
MAN, THINK BEFORE YOU TELL STORIES LIKE THAT.
3
THINK
OH, THAT'S RIGHT...


I LIVE AT THE BOOK STORE, SO I KNOW THIS IS TOTAL BULLSHIT
DUDE, THIS AIN'T NO JOKE
"AND SO THE GIRL WAS KILLED BY THE MONSTER AND ALL THAT WAS LEFT WAS THE BOOK, WHICH ENDED UP GETTING SOLD BACK TO THE BOOK STORE," OR SOMETHING


NOW LET'S FINISH CLEANING UP AND HEAD HOME!!
TOTALLY
SO HE WAS SCARED.
D-DON'T BE STUPID, THERE'S NO WAY I COULD BE SCARED OF A STUPID LITTLE CHILDREN'S STORY LIKE THAT!!
SO YAKOU'S SCARED
Just maybe.
SFX: Various cleaning noises

THIS TALK ABOUT A GHOST STORY BEGAN A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO
AND ABOUT THAT TIME, WHAT FEW CUSTOMERS WE GOT STOPPED COMING IN.
*Storefront: Hall of Eternity Antique Bookstore

AND IT'S ALL THANKS TO THIS SENILE OLD FOOL
HE DUMPED THIS STORE ON ME SO THAT HE COULD GO LIVE HIS OWN LIFE
Hii, Xikou, doing alright?
Daddy's living it up in Vegas! Bye♡
Signed
Dad

I DON'T EVEN REALLY LIKE BOOKS,
AND I'M NOT TOO FOND OF THIS STORE, EITHER
5

AH, WELCOME TO OUR ST
Turn
RIP
THEY PISS ME OFF SO MUCH
THIS FUCKING GHOST STORY, THAT FUCKING OLD MAN

ばん
ん
ん

She's super hot...
W... Whoa. .
6
So even girls like her come to bookstores ...
AH WELCOME TO OUR STORE.
UMM... ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SOME-THING?
.....
?
ヌッ

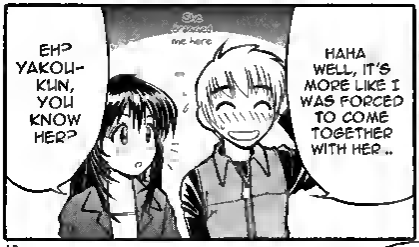
YOU WOULON'T HAPPEN TO BE IZUMI KINOSHITA'S SON...
KINOSHITA YAKOU, WOULD YOU?
YEAH
ドキ
ドキドキ
YEAH, I AM, FOR ONCE...
SFX Heart beating
……
AT LAST! I FINALLY FOUND HIM!
SHIORINA COULON'T BE HAPPIER!!!
7
UMM... WAIT
COME, COME, COME WITH ME, YAKOU-KUN ♡
COME ON, COME ON, GET CHANGED, GET CHANGED!!

IF IT'S BOOKS YOU'RE AFTER
COME TALK TO ME
BEAUTIFUL BOOK LOCATOR
KAMIDA SHIORINA
OH YEAH, HERE YOU GO. I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM YOUR FATHER ASKING ME TO TAKE CARE OF THE STORE
OH MY GOD, I HAD SO MUCH TROUBLE FINDING THAT SHOP OF YOURS
YOU HAVEN'T HEARD FROM YOUR FATHER?
OH, YOU MEAN
BOOK LOCA-TOR?
IF IT'S JUST UNTIL YOUR FATHER COMES BACK, THEN I THINK IT'LL WORK OUT GREAT
LATELY, I HAVEN'T BEEN GETTING MUCH WORK, SO I HAD PLENTY OF TIME
REALLY
GETTING TO KNOW YOUR FATHER WAS QUITE THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I'M A "BOOK DETECTIVE"
A BOOK LOCATOR IS SOMEONE WHO TAKES ORDERS FROM STORES TRYING TO FIND BOOKS FROM ALL AROUND THE COUNTRY..

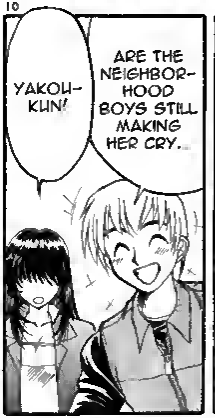
ANYHOW, THE STORE WILL BE HANDLED BY ME.
AND I'LL HAVE YOU TAKE ON ANOTHER JOB.
EH?
UHM, I DIDN'T PARTICULARLY NEED TO HEAR THAT.
AND, I GET SO EXCITED WHEN WE TALK ABOUT BOOKS ♡
SINCE THAT DAY WE MET, I'VE MADE IT MY GOAL TO SEE ALL OF HIS "HIDDEN TREASURES."
YOUR FAMILY'S HERITAGE ...
THE "OTHER" JOB.
My family's ...
"other" job?

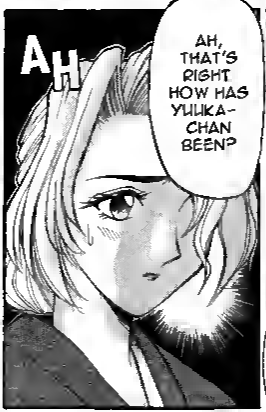
WELL WELL,
IF IT ISN'T KINOSHITA-SAN'S BOY, YAKOU-KUN.
AND YOU CAME TOGETHER WITH THE BOOK LOCATOR GIRL...

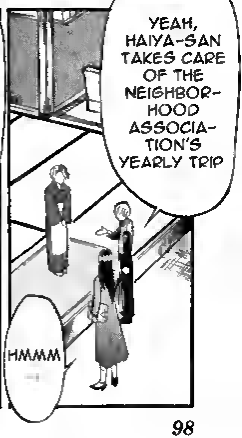
NAGANO PREFECTURE, KARUIZAWA
SNOW STOP HOT SPRING HOTEL
"HAIYA" 9 20PM
THANK YOU FOR COMING ALL THE WAY OUT HERE...

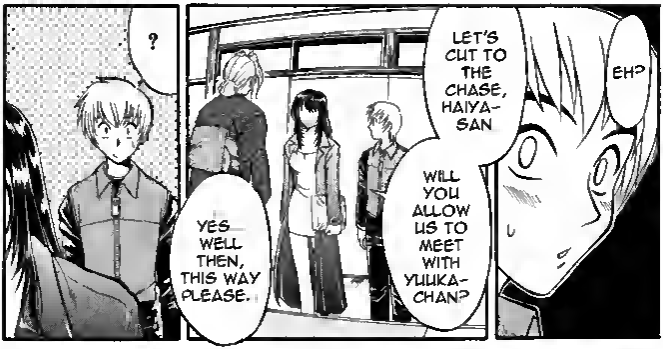

me here
EH? YAKOU-KUN, YOU KNOW HER?
HAHA WELL, IT'S MORE LIKE I WAS FORCED TO COME TOGETHER WITH HER..

10


YAKOU-KUN!
ARE THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD BOYS STILL MAKING HER CRY..


AH
AH, THAT'S RIGHT HOW HAS YUUKA-CHAN BEEN?

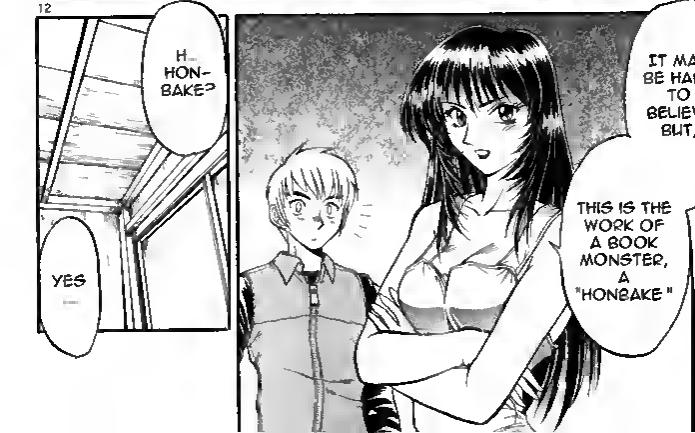

YEAH, HAIYA-SAN TAKES CARE OF THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD ASSOCIA-TION'S YEARLY TRIP
HMMM


?
LET'S CUT TO THE CHASE, HAIYA-SAN
EH?
WILL YOU ALLOW US TO MEET WITH YUUKA-CHAN?
YES WELL THEN, THIS WAY PLEASE.

ON HER WAY HOME FROM HER LESSONS, I BELIEVE THAT SHE WAS ATTACKED BY SOMEONE
IT WAS ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO
NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE WASH THEM, THEY WON'T COME OFF
ON THAT DAY, THESE CHARACTERS APPEARED ON HER SKIN
EVER SINCE THAT DAY, IT'S BEEN UNBEAR-ABLE FOR HER TO LEAVE THIS ROOM
AND SHE WON'T TALK TO ANYONE .

Yuuka-chan
That bright little Yuuka-chan ..
For her to not say anything and shut herself in her room like this...
What the hell happened to her?!

VERY WELL, I UNDER-STAND.
THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT.


IT MAY BE HARD TO BELIEVE BUT,
THIS IS THE WORK OF A BOOK MONSTER, A "HONBAKE."
H... HON-BAKE?
YES

THEY LIVE INSIDE OF BOOKS FOR MONTHS, EVEN YEARS BOOKWORMS THAT CAN BECOME DEMONS
ONCE IT TAKES ON THE SOUL THE LETTERS IN THE BOOK BEGIN TO COVER THE ENTIRE BODY OF THE VICTIM.
THEY FEAST ON THE SOULS OF THEIR OWNERS, AND THEREBY BECOME HONBAKE
BEFORE LONG, THE VICTIM LOSES ALL CONSCIOUSNESS BECOMES DEBILITATED AND IN A MONTH, WILL DIE
AND TODAY, I HAVE BROUGHT YOU A SPECIALIST IN THE ART OF EXTERMINATING HONBAKE, A GREAT BOOK WARRIOR!
BUT PLEASE DON'T FRET! IF WE EXTERMINATE THAT HONBAKE, THEN EVERYTHING WILL RETURN TO THE WAY IT WAS.
THEN THEN YUUKA.
YOU'RE SAYING THAT SHE HAPPENED TO BUY ONE OF THESE BOOKS AND IS NOW CARRYING ONE OF THESE "BOOKWORMS" INSIDE OF HER?

WHAT THE FUCK ?!
I DON'T SEE ANY BOOK WARRIOR HERE.
IT'S YOU, YAKOU-KUN.
WHAT IN THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THAT'S FUCKING IMPOSSIBLE!
I'M JUST A REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT!
BESIDES, ISN'T THAT "BOOK MONSTER" ALL MAKE BELIEVE?!
YOU KNOW, LIKE THAT GHOST STORY SOME GRADE SCHOOLERS MADE UP...
THUNK
I AM
A CAT
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK

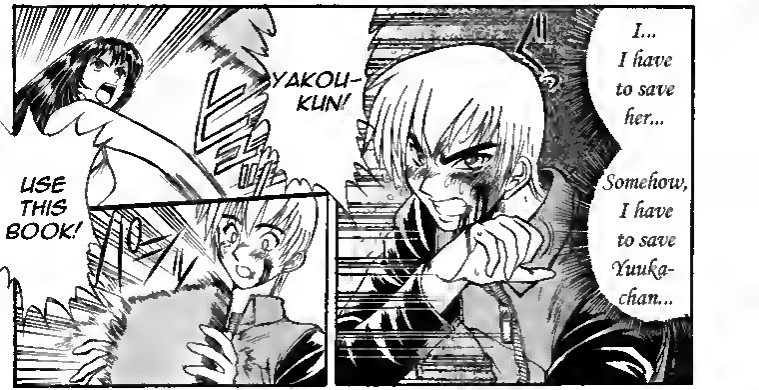
Note: This monster comes from the book titled "I Am a Cat" written by Souseki Natsume.

AS YET, I HAVE NO NAME.
(Page 5)
I AM A CAT BY NATSUME SOUSEKI
A CAT OBSERVES THE LIVES OF THE HUMANS THAT LIVE AROUND HIM
SOUSEKI'S FIRST SUCCESSFUL NOVEL-LENGTH WORK
WOOSH
UWAAA! WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?
UGH.

ALL OF MY COMFORTS COME THROUGH HARDSHIP.
(Page 40)
YUUKA-CHAN!
YU-
AAAHHH!
WHAT?!
THIS IS BAD THE HONBAKE
IS TRYING TO SUCK OUT YUUKA-CHAN'S SOUL!

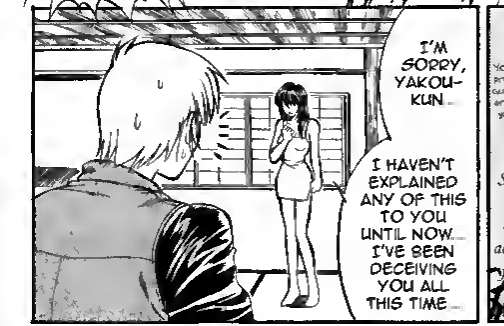
I DON'T WANT TO DIEEEE!!
NO, NOOO!
Shit ...
No matter how you look at it, that guy's a monster...
17
Oh no! I still haven't given him the book...
YOU'LL LOSE IF YOU FIGHT HIM BARE-HANDED!! YAKOU-KU-
!!
FUCK !!

ドカカカカッ
OW
ふぐぐぐぐ
THAT HURT


I... I have to save her...
Somehow, I have to save Yuuka-chan...
YAKOU-KUN!
ヒュ
USE THIS BOOK!

THAT BOOK IS "THE GUIDE TO KNOWING ALL PROSPERITY IN RAPE BOOK STORES"..
IT'S THE BOOK YOUR FATHER ENTRUSTED TO YOU!
IT'S A BOOK TO USE AGAINST THAT MONSTER

IT'S A BOOK MADE BY YOUR ANCESTORS
YOUR FATHER SAYS THAT, FOR DESCENDANTS OF THE KINOSHITA FAMILY, THAT BOOK CARRIES SPECIAL POWER
MY... MY OLD MAN?!
YES, THAT'S RIGHT


I'M SORRY, YAKOU-KUN...
I HAVEN'T EXPLAINED ANY OF THIS TO YOU UNTIL NOW... I'VE BEEN DECEIVING YOU ALL THIS TIME...

So that's it That old bastard
You're pretty gullible aren't you?
Shiorina-san has been his accomplice from the start

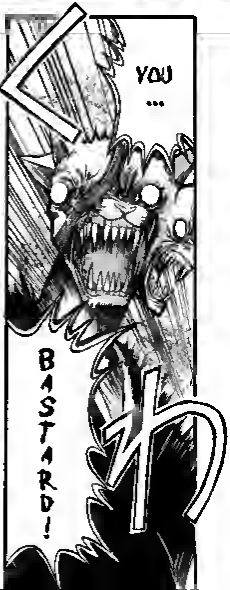
REGARDLESS OF EVERYTHING, YOUR FATHER ISN'T HERE, AND THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SAVE THAT CHILD IS YOU...
YOU DON'T NEED TO TELL ME THAT, SHIORINA-SAN.
BUT
ALL I WANT YOU TO KNOW IS THIS.

I'LL DEAL WITH THE OLD MAN LATER...
ALRIGHT THEN! OPEN THE BOOK AND LOOK AT THE BACK COVER!
FOR NOW, I NEED YOU TO TEACH ME HOW TO USE THIS BOOK SO THAT I CAN SAVE YUUKA-CHAN.
THE BACK COVER?
YOU'LL FIND THE ENDING INDEX FOLDING PAPER
LOOK CAREFULLY AT THE INSTRUC-TIONS IN THE BOOK,
IT'S SPECIAL PAPER TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE BOOK MONSTER
AND FOLD THE PAPER INTO ORIGAMI.
DID YOU SAY ORIGAMI ?!

UWAA AAA!
FOLD-ING PA-PEEER.
F-
FOLD-ING PAPER ...

GA
GAAA
GA

A MOUNTAIN FOLD HERE, A VALLEY FOLD HERE, A MOUNTAIN FOLD HERE
FOLD DOWN THIS LINE, MAKE A VALLEY FOLD HERE, A MOUNTAIN FOLD HERE, A VALLEY FOLD HERE...
..FOLD DOWN THIS LINE, OPEN UP THIS FOLD...


YOU ...
BASTARD!

Make this paper ...
... into origami!!
YOU'RE MAKING A FOOL OUT OF ME.
(Page 227)
23
FOLD DOWN THIS LINE...

ANNOYANCES OF THE WORLD NEED ONLY BE REMOVED.
(Page 448)
MOUNTAIN FOLD, VALLEY FOLD, VALLEY FOLD, MOUNTAIN FOLD
MOUNTAIN, VALLEY, VALLEY, VALLEY, MOVE INSIDE THIS FOLD...
TOP, DOWN, TOP, TOP...
FOLD DOWN, FOLD UP, FOLD UP...

オ!!
!!
HAAA
...
YAKOU
!!!

THAT IS WHY YOU
WILL NEVER BE MORE THAN A FOOL.
(Page 425)
……
EH?
WHAT, WHAT?

THE "FOOL" HERE
IS YOU!
DON'T THINK YOU'VE WON YET, YOU MONSTER

THE GUIDE TO KNOWING ALL PROSPERITY IN RARE BOOK STORES
!?
INDEX FOLDING PAPER DIRECTIVE NUMBER SEVEN!
FLOWER FIST !!!
GAAAA!

28
I DON'T REALLY LIKE BOOKS BUT,
I SURE DO LIKE THEM BETTER
THAN I LIKE YOU!

GYAAAA!
Really, it's just like Izumi-san said, there's nothing at all to worry about.
Amazing. Even though it was his first encounter, he was able to use origami so well.
YAKOU-SAN
KOUKOU
I WANT TO THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR SAVING YUUKA
NO, NO NO NEED TO THANK ME. I'M JUST HAPPY THOSE LETTERS HAVE DIS-APPEARED
.....
HA?
30

WELL, EVEN THOUGH HE MAY HAVE FAILED IN OTHER AREAS,
WHEN I LOOK AT THIS BRIGHT AND HEALTHY YUUKA-CHAN,
Wiggles!
I FEEL A LITTLE
>JUST A LITTLE< BETTER ABOUT THIS JOB THE OLD MAN GAVE ME.
SH-
TWITCH
TWITCH
TWITCH
TWITCH
TWITCH
SHIORI-NA-SAN?
STILL ...
Huh?
AAAAA AAAAH HH!!!

So, from the beginning, her only concern was for Souseki's book. She was just using me.
She... She couldn't mean.
NOW THAT IT'S COME TO THIS, I HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE...
YOU WENT TOO FAR! IF THE BOOK IS THIS DAMAGED, HOW THE HELL ARE WE GONNA PUT IT UP FOR SALE?!
NOW WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO, YOU BIG STUPID IDIOT!
F-FOR SALE?
32
GO... GO WITH YOU
WHERE?
AS PUNISHMENT FOR HAVING DESTROYED THE SOUSEKI, I'LL HAVE YOU COME WITH ME TO GO GET IT.
IT'S AN ORIGINAL FIRST EDITION PRINT VALUED AT NO LESS THAN 10 MILLION YEN.
ACTUALLY, LAST WEEK I GOT SOME INFO ABOUT A HONBAKE IN DOSTOEVSKY'S "CRIME AND PUNISHMENT."
WOW! YUKA WANTS TO COME TOO!
NO... NO WAY!!! WAIT, HOLD ON!!
WE'VE GOT NO TIME TO LOSE!
あ
あああああ
SHOULDN'T IT BE OBVIOUS?
IT'S IN RUSSIA, OF COURSE ♡
═古書店夜光書戦記・完═
AND THUS BEGAN THE BOOK PRESERVATION SERVICES OF THE HALL OF ETERNITY ANTIQUE BOOKSTORE.